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# What Motivations Influence Rheumatoid Arthritis (RA)

## Patients in their Decision to Participate in Clinical Trials?

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### AIMS

***This pilot study had several aims:***

- To investigate what motivates rheumatoid arthritis (RA) patients in their decision to enter clinical trials.
- To determine whether RA patients are motivated by one specific factor, or if RA patients' motivations were more complex and due to a combination of factors.
- To compare responses from Clinical Research Facility (CRF) patients with responses from those patients seen for trials in rheumatology departments to determine if motivations differed between the two patient groups.

### METHODOLOGY

37 patients currently participating in RA clinical trials across two NHS trusts in the North-East of England were issued with a self-completion questionnaire following informed consent. Questionnaires were identical and included:

- Basic demographic information.
- A series of 15 closed ended questions in the form of statements to determine patients' motivations for entering their clinical trial (Fig.1).
- One open ended question for any other reasons to be documented.

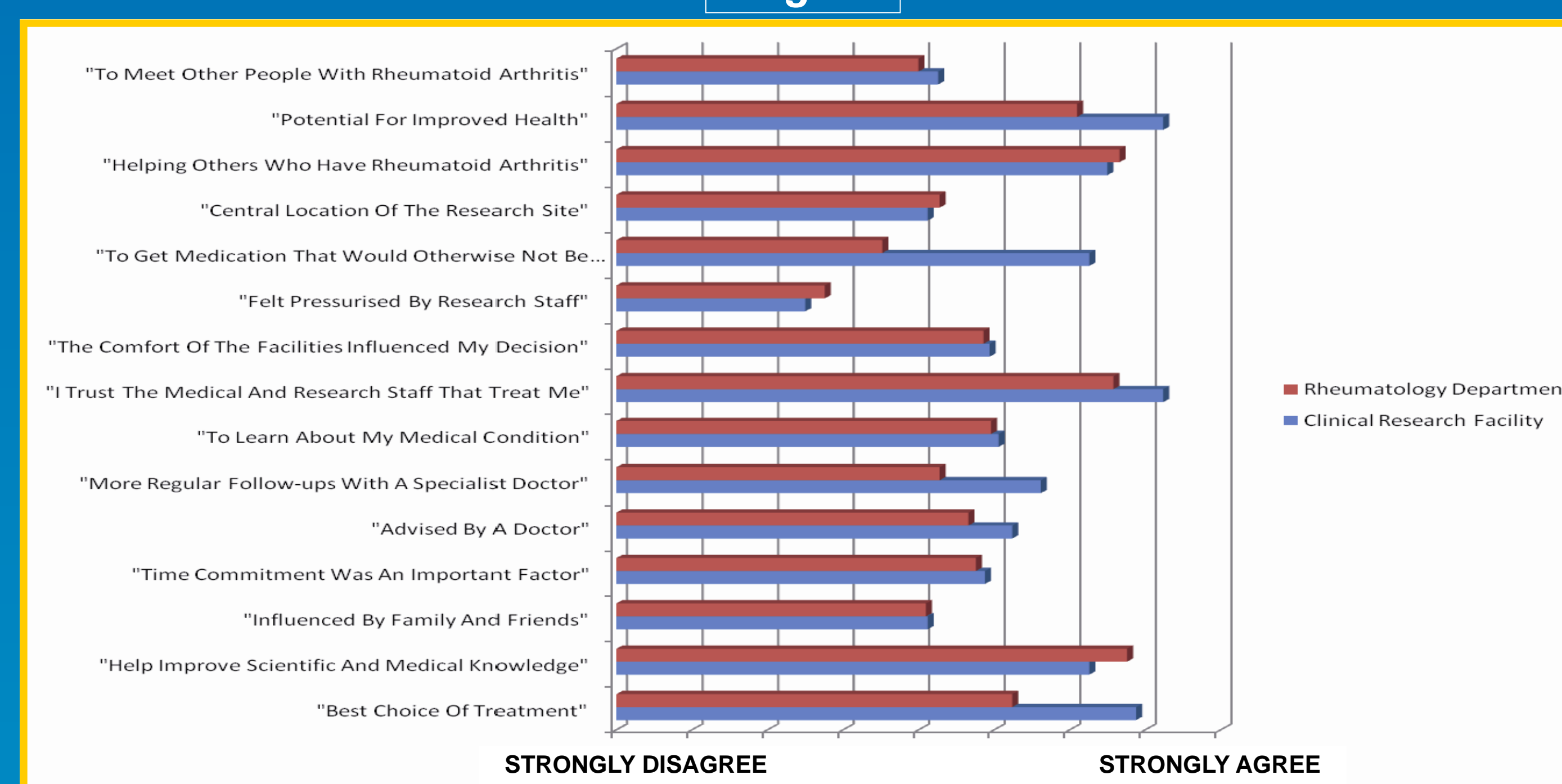
Fig.1:



### RESULTS

Mean responses for both altruistic statements ("to improve scientific and medical knowledge" and "to help others"), as well as "the potential for improved health" and "because I trust the medical staff that treat me" all fell between the values for "agree" and "strongly agree" (Fig. 2). The whole group felt that they were not pressurised to participate by research staff.

Fig.2:



Responses between CRF patients and rheumatology department patients showed significant difference ( $p=0.05$ ) in 4 of the 15 statements. "Best choice of treatment", "more regular follow-ups", "to get medication not otherwise available on the NHS" and "potential for improved health" were all show to be more strongly agreed as motivating factors amongst the CRF group of patients compared to the rheumatology department patients.

### DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

Clinical research plays an essential role in the development of new and innovative treatments for RA. It is therefore important that we begin to understand the needs of the patient in respect to their decision to enter clinical trials. Understanding this will aid recruitment into rheumatology research, as well as allow practitioners to identify the needs of the patients and work with them to make the clinical trial experience a good one. Results from this study are promising, and several conclusions can be made:

- Results suggest a combination of influences affect RA patients' decision to participate in clinical trials.
- The desire for improved health appears to be a major reason for entering RA clinical trials.
- Trust in the clinician and research team appears to be a strong motivation.
- Significant differences in responses between the CRF group and the rheumatology department group would suggest different recruitment strategies for clinical trials should be used in the different clinical areas.
- Further research in a larger sample of the RA population would be beneficial to further clarify these results.

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